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INSIDE THE CIVIL SERVICE.

It will be in the recollection of many of our readers that a few years ago there arose a great outcry for administrative reform. It was made at a time of crisis, at a time when people were justly indignant that our army in the Crimea had not been so well equipped to encounter General January and Marshal February, as it had proved itself to be against that Russian emperor who made the cruel *mot*. And as the discussion grew out of this crisis-time, and was continued with the bitter feelings connected with it, so it got exaggerated and distorted with the platform sparkle of stump-oratory; and when that subsided, it was doubtful for the moment whether we had gained anything more than two new phrases to our language, 'the art of knowing how *not* to do it,' and 'the right man in the right place.'

Such, however, was not altogether the result. Before the discussion began, certain good men and true, themselves either within the higher ranks of the service, or intimately connected with it, had been planning improvements; and backed by the strong external feeling which then arose, they were enabled to make two great and valuable modifications: one—by the system of competitive examination—affecting the mode of getting into the service; the other—by a change in the superannuation regulations—relating to the process of getting out of it.

The rationale of competitive examinations gets from time to time discussed. It is by no means the business of this paper to go into it. *Hamlet*, *Paradise Lost*, the invention of steam, or of the electric light, are not, were not, never will be producible by it; but as regards the official Civil Service, something of the sort was inevitable. When every vote of every member of parliament comes, within a few hours of its delivery, under the comment of an energetic daily press, patronage ceases to be available for party purposes; and to the members who represent large constituencies, it has long been felt to be a serious inconvenience. The value of the change to the Civil

Service consists in its getting rid of the one great difficulty in managing the junior branches; a clerk can no longer thrust his patron in his senior's face. Senior clerks, who have still anything to hope for for themselves, can hardly be expected to have the independence of the Eton Boy, who, when a new-comer pleaded that his father was a marquis, gave him one kick for himself, and two for the peer. It is therefore a matter greatly to be rejoiced at that in the Civil Service the 'marquis' incubus is rapidly disappearing. It was anticipated that a fresh sort of insubordination would arise from the conceit of young men who had come out of large competitions victoriously; but it has been found that whilst the internal *vis inertiae* of the service was not strong enough to resist the patron influence, it is quite able to hold its own against any young gentleman who happens to be conceited because it is indebted for the honour of his company to his having been posted up rather more freshly than his fellows in the matter of the Peloponnesian war. Whatever may be the special moralities of the principle, it has become an accomplished fact. It has thrown open the Civil Service to a different class of men from those who formerly adulterated it; and we believe it will sooner or latter necessitate a change in the internal organisation.

It is not meant for a moment that the best minds of a country should be invited into its official civil service. It would be a sad thing, indeed, for the richness, variety, and power of our national character, if its best intellects were hampered with the inevitable pedantries of Tape. The prizes in the open professions of the law, church, physic, and literature, are far too good to make us fear that the most energetic and original minds will ever be satisfied with that which, however much it may be improved and modified, will be always, in the nature of things, an anonymous and very moderately-paid vocation. Nevertheless, it is to the interest of the nation that this vocation should be made, that which it by no means is at present, a happy, honourable, interesting, and sufficiently remunerated occupation.

It is not that any larger amount of money is wanted, but only a re-distribution of it. The establishments have been organised upon the old conception of making as many berths as possible, and not being at all particular about getting much work out of a man, or about paying him properly for it. The public now, although pretty well aware that it does not want either Newtons to keep its accounts, or Shakespeares to write its business-letters, has declared, by the institution of competitive or of pass examinations, that it would rather not be served, as a matter of course, by the progeny of electioneering agents or of gentlemen's gentlemen; but it appears to us that the public must go a step further, and modify the internal arrangements of its service, if it really wishes to be served by anybody much better.

A young man is generally eligible between the ages of 16 or 17, and 20 or 21. Let us say that he gets his appointment at 18; he will probably receive £80 the first year, £90 the second, £100 the third, and so on, until he reaches £200, at which, unless he gets promotion, he will stop. 'Well,' it may be said, 'that is better pay than a clerk in the mercantile world.' To this we would rejoin, that there is, or should be, no analogy. Merchants' clerks may be divided into three classes: those of elementary education and limited capacity, who have no ambition to be more than clerks, and are contented with lower wages than skilled artisans; those of greater energy and power, who are willing for a while to work at a low rate, for the sake of what they learn, and in order that they may keep their keen eyes always fixed on one or other of the many avenues to commercial success; such men are merchants from the cradle, in all but capital; they get forward by hundreds and thousands in our great cities, but in their earlier phases they are cheap clerks. The third class consists of the sons or relatives of merchants, who are willing that for a while their children should work for pocket-money, or for nothing, in the counting-houses of their friends, until they have acquired the insight that shall fit them for their own. Government clerks, if they do their duty, must be something better than the first of these, and with the other two, their possibilities in life have no affinities.

It appears to us that the proper thing to do would be to place them from the first as nearly as possible on a level, not with the brilliant exceptions, but with the steady, sterling rank and file of the open professions. They have not had to incur the expensive educational speciality of the doctor, and therefore, where one makes a thousand a year, let the other receive five hundred; they have not been articled with heavy premiums, to solicitors or engineers, and therefore, as regards the capital invested, they cannot look for such returns; but the bulk of the government work, if it is to be done clearly, concisely, and promptly, requires mental and moral qualities as good and high as those out of which ordinary doctors and solicitors and engineers are made. The pay should bear the same proportion, and if properly managed, it would cost no more.

We left our young gentleman with the prospect that, after seven years' service and at the age of twenty-five, he would be in possession of the magnificent gross income of £150 a year. We will not say that there is the income tax to come

off, because everybody has to pay that; besides, the income tax is always coming off, in a different sense, the very next session; but the only possible way a public-office man has of making provision for a family is by life-assurance, and if he has only gone in for a thousand pounds, that will take about twenty pounds off his income, and so the world is all before him with £130 a year. Now, perhaps, the marrying age of the most cultivated branch of the middle class—from whose ranks, as giving some strain of gentle birth, some traditions of civility, it is desirable that our government clerks should mainly spring—is a little older than this; but it is a matter of profound regret to those most interested in either the body's health or the soul's welfare of the young manhood of England, that it should be so; and one of the greatest difficulties in giving a really gentlemanly, moral tone to the service arises from the enforced celibacy of the young men. Some see it, and throw up their appointments in disgust; there are many of those who stay, who would willingly do the work of three, if only they might receive the pay of two, but that is not to be heard of; and so, can we wonder at the sarcasms that are thrown at them? It is said they become mere danglers in drawing-rooms, if they are refined—

Things whose trade is over ladies
To lean, and flirt, and stare, and simper;

or mere habitués of the Cider Cellars, if they are not: that they just manage to save the extreme margin of the office-hour in the morning, and have always got their hands washed and their hats brushed before the office-hour in the afternoon; and during the day are to be found, one assiduously doing nothing, and one other more assiduously helping him. The picture is a libel. There are thousands of conscientious young men in the service, and we believe there is very little actual idleness; but anything more deteriorating to all mental power, at a time of life when it is readiest to try its strength, than to persuade a young gentleman that a mere six hours a day of semi-mechanical, monotonous work is good and sufficient for him, and that he should be content with the wages of a butler for doing it, it is impossible to conceive.

Suppose, on the other hand, he was left for a year or two longer to complete his education, and to consolidate his health with those manly exercises which in this country are, happily, the general accompaniments of adult education. Say that he does not take to the office-stool until he is one-and-twenty, and that the moment he gets there he is intrusted with reasonably responsible work, finding himself in possession of two hundred a year, with rapid annual increments to three or four, and more gradual but certain developments to six or eight hundred. Would it not be better for all parties concerned? And it need not, as we think, cost any more. Some of the higher offices are overpaid; not overpaid, perhaps, on the present system, because men have to work the first half of their lives on under-pay, have to verify the old saw, that in the public service the first half of your life is to be spent in getting into debt, in order that you may spend the second half, if you are lucky, in getting out of it; but eight hundred to one thousand a year, where there is no anxiety about economics, no such risks to run as those of a merchant, no such serious strain on

health as to the rising barrister or physician, is very good pay in active life, particularly when you can take two-thirds of it with you into retirement; and in the lower grades, we have a strong impression that if the young men had the stimulus of a modest competency within their reach at three or four-and-twenty, upon condition that they worked as other men are obliged to do for competencies, they would not only be healthier, happier, and abler fellows, but about one half of their number might be dispensed with.

The necessity for some change in the present system has been admitted, by implication, in the plan of occasionally making 'staff appointments,' as they are called; that is to say, of introducing men not previously in the service at once to some of the more responsible berths. This procedure is attempted to be justified by the assertion, that men remain subordinate so long that they are not to be trusted with responsible work. It is too true, that, being for the first five or six years in each other's way over the office-fire, or else occupied in recovering from that frequent indisposition which habitual supping on devilled kidneys at underground places of amusement is apt to engender, are not good educational influences for responsible employment; but there is such a capacity for a 'job' in a staff appointment, that it should be made as seldom as possible, and never in a way to thwart the legitimate aspirations of the regular hands; indeed, its use at all, except upon a very distinct understanding, involves something analogous if not to a breach of contract, certainly to a breach of faith. No one, unless he be half an idiot, and knows it, enters the Civil Service to remain a junior clerk all his life; and the number and value of the higher appointments to which by good conduct and character he may in turn attain, form very real if not an accurately definable element in the inducement held out to him by the nation to serve it. Now, if the senior captain in a regiment were to find the majority, vacant by the death of its previous possessor, suddenly abolished, or reduced in its emoluments, he would naturally feel that he had been beguiled into giving his best energies to his country under false incitements; and if this would certainly be the case in the army, where money is by no means the main motive to service, how much more so must it be a hardship in those branches of duty where the necessity for providing daily bread is the principal cause for undertaking them.

One great move has undoubtedly been made in the right direction in the recent reconstruction of the Superannuation Act. Until then, the principles which guided the grants were obscure and sometimes conflicting. The stoppages made from the pay were believed by eminent actuaries to be excessive, and the whole thing was muddled up into a misty indefiniteness of account much more like the arrangement of a circumlocution office than of a straightforward nation; but now the matter is so far clear, that ten years' service gives a right to ten-sixtieths of the full salary, in case of breaking down; and every additional year up to forty gives an additional sixtieth; but unless one has reached the age of sixty, the enjoyment of this is entirely conditional on breaking down. Now, a man with the health which the country has a right to demand from well-paid servants, and with the business which it ought to put upon

him, has no time to break down. The model clerk—and all government clerks ought to be model clerks—does not break down; and when he sees some of the sickly ones who have never earned their salt, march off in middle life with decent pensions, and finds that, however plausibly the medical certificate upon which they have retired makes them out to be unfit for further service, they yet seem to have quite enough health left in them to perform the agreeable duty of gentlemen at large, he cannot quite like it. It is true, these middle-aged pensioners are liable to be recalled on recovery, but they never recover sufficiently for that; probably they are never required to recover to that extent, because, when the ranks from which they have slipped are once closed up, it would be difficult to know where to reinsert them, and what to do with them. Still, the working-bee, when he thinks of these men, feels that it is they and not he who get the best of the bargain as regards the superannuation element in it; and it may occur to him that if a retiring allowance is to be made a part of the bargain at all, it would be better that it should be available at any time of life, without any question as to health, or what is occasionally the juggle of a medical certificate. We confess we cannot quite see why a government clerk should not be allowed, like any other rational creature, to make his own provision for old age or broken health, if he were furnished from the first with pay sufficiently large to enable him to do it; but the present Superannuation Act, by defining and simplifying the relation between the employers and employed, is undoubtedly a move in the right direction.

There is one curious fact connected with it. In the original bill, as amended by committee, there was a clause compelling men to retire at the age of sixty-five; and it was generally supposed that in spite of a prime minister nearly eighty, the authorities had become aware that men, in general, passed, after sixty, from the class of Ajax into that of Nestor; that however full of gained knowledge and sage counsel, they were ceasing to be fit leaders and controllers of executive hosts. It was thought, too, that possibly it was intended that the inferiority of pay in the junior classes, against which we have been pleading, should be compensated by a greater rapidity of promotion. But somehow or other, this clause of the bill has dropped out of the act, and there is nothing in the law as it stands to prevent a man of eighty hanging on by the eyelids if he can. We really do not know why the clause was omitted; it provided for the retention of specially useful men, if their continuance (in office) 'should be deemed advantageous to the public service,' and therefore it could not be on that account.

Perhaps the one thing of all others which would ennoble the Civil Service would be a parliamentary Court of Appeal—a large committee appointed when parliament first meets after election, and sitting in permanence until the dissolution. At present, all that is done by a government department is nominally done by the head of it, by 'My Lords'; but practically it is not so. 'My Lords' are engaged in the intrigues of party politics, and do a great many things by the advice of the permanent hands; this is more particularly the case in matters relating to internal organisation. Moreover, the great departments, such as the Treasury,

Admiralty, and Board of Trade, are connected with a good many sub-sections, over whom they have not always absolute control, but in whose pie they keep a finger; and when they tamper with the domestic economy of these, by appointing pets of their own to the good things in them, or remodel the salaries in a way that cuts cruelly on faithful workers, it is like thrashing a bolster to find out why this is done, or who did it. Sometimes the special appointment may be wise, and the hardship inevitable; but if those who eat their hearts under the sorrow of even a fancied wrong, could go at once to a parliamentary committee, and pray for an investigation, few, perhaps, would do it, but we cannot help thinking that there would be still fewer cases in which it would be needful that it should be done.

FORTY YEARS IN AMERICA.

A MAN who has lived forty years in America, North and South, ought to know something about it, and Dr Nichols,* who asserts that he possesses that lengthened experience, is certainly a writer upon many accounts who deserves our best attention. He has an observant eye, considerable sense of humour, and an agreeable vivacity of style that never flags. An immense mass of information, more or less to be depended upon, is contained in his two volumes, and we are thankful to get it, leavened though it be with all sorts of prejudices and special pleadings. What he has seen is almost always interesting and well described, and as for his own reflections upon the same, although they are put somewhat prominently forward, the reader would do wrong to shut up the volume in a passion upon that account. Dr Nichols is obviously a partisan; but as it is perfectly impossible to find any American writer at present who is anything else, let us welcome him as his talents deserve.

The work is begun, as it seems to us, in a more sober spirit than it continues; the bitterness of the Exile is soon apparent, the gall mingles with the ink, and the great historical pictures are exchanged for caricatures of the living. This is, however, only characteristic of our author's nationality, and we are not sure whether Philip drunk—that is, an American gentleman upon his own platform, is not preferable to Philip sober—the same individual upon natural productions, exports, imports, geographical boundaries, and climate. Of this last, as it exists in New York even, English folks are very ignorant. They have no notion of the extremes of American heat and cold. Men die of sunstroke in summer, and are frozen—sometimes frozen to death—in winter. In the capital above mentioned, coachmen have been found dead on their boxes, and scarcely a summer passes that men do not die from the excessive heat. General Hooker is said to have lost a thousand men by sunstroke in that forced march to Washington, when it was threatened by General Lee. North American grass is not evergreen like that of England, but frozen black at one time, and parched with drought at another.

Another common error of ours is to imagine American military titles are assumed according to the taste and fancy of the wearer. Every Yankee

of any account enters the militia, passes through as many of the grades as he can afford—it is very expensive to be a general—and then resigns, clear of all military duty. It is a mode of exemption. In a year or two a man gets the title of captain, and is for ever free from service. 'In America it is therefore safe to call any decent man—a stage-driver or hostler—captain; and any gentlemanly person [sic] —a railway-conductor or tavern-keeper, major or colonel!' It is sometimes difficult to tell when our author is serious, and when (to use his own expression) he is talking Bunkum. But in the case of other people, he never suffers us to be in doubt for a moment. Thus, upon a certain celebration of the glorious Declaration of Independence, he relates the following admirable incident.

'It was during the Harrison Hard-cider campaign [pray, observe the names] that there was a great Tippecanoe and Tyler too mass-meeting at Saratoga, the fashionable summer resort in the northern part of New York. The meeting was very large; several counties assembled. Conspicuous on the platform was a group of white-headed revolutionary soldiers, whom the orators duly celebrated, and who were giving their support to the hero of sundry Indian battle-fields. One of the orators, not content with the customary allusions, determined to have something more effective, and addressing one of the venerable patriots, said: "You fought in the glorious war of independence?"'

"Yaaa," replied the old man, with a strong German accent—"yaaa, I vas in te var."

"This white-haired veteran was in that glorious contest for our liberties, fellow-citizens; and here he is, ready to fight or to vote for them once more. And now, my venerable friend, who was your commander?—what general did you serve under in that great struggle for freedom and independence?"'

"General Burgoyne!" was the honest reply. This was the unfortunate British commander who had to surrender to the Yankees, as everybody knows.'

Mr P. T. Barnum has always seemed to us to be the very model of a Yankee, and we are pleased, and not surprised to find that our author, who is his fellow-countryman, is of the same opinion likewise. P. T. Barnum, as we are all aware, was born in Connecticut, kept a store, edited a newspaper, filled a pulpit, became a showman, sold Bibles, invented the nurse of General Washington, exhibited the Feejee Mermaid, organised the American tour of Jenny Lind, brought out General Tom Thumb, lectured on temperance, and made two or three fortunes. But Dr Nichols has something new to tell us even of this world-famous and many-sided scamp.

* Barnum was on his way up the river from New Orleans, where he had been to spend the winter in some speculation. Some of the sporting gentlemen who make their home on the river engaged him in the favourite betting game of poker [*Anglice*, "brag"], in which the skill consists, not so much in having the best cards, as in convincing your adversary that you have them. It must have been hard to beat the great showman; but luck was against him, and he was dead broke. He landed at a small town in Mississippi, where he found the chances of winning money at play very small, on account of a revival that was going forward. But "P. T." had more than one string to his bow. He had been a preacher once himself—as it happened, a Universalist—holding a creed that was agreeable to one of his organisation. He announced his profession, and obtained a place to preach, but found his doctrines anything but popular.

* *Forty Years of American Life.* By Dr Nichols. Maxwell.

The Southerners are orthodox in their religious opinions, and like strong doctrine. The revival, on the other hand, was attracting crowds to the Presbyterian meeting-house. It was necessary to make a bold movement, and the exhibiter of dwarfs and *prima donnas* was equal to the occasion. He dismissed his small and indifferent congregation, walked over to the Presbyterian meeting, and announced to the astonished and delighted assembly that he had been converted from his errors. There was great rejoicing; he was invited to preach; was rewarded with a good collection; resumed his voyage, and had good-luck at poker all the way to St Louis.

This was the gentleman who invited the Baptist ministers of Boston to administer the holy sacrament to Joyee Seth, the drunken old negress, whom he pretended had been Washington's nurse; who got up the public wedding of two giants at the Broadway Tabernacle, to which spectators were admitted at fifty cents a head; and who, more recently, made a popular spectacle of the marriage of two dwarfs in the most fashionable church of New York. The best trait about this eminently smart and spry individual is his persuading the New Yorkers—who at that time had, almost without exception, negro-phobia—to come and see a *real* nigger boy, blacked and wigged, so as to pass for a make-believe one, dance the dances and sing the songs of his compatriots. If they had but found it out, they would probably have pulled the theatre about the too-enterprising Barnum's ears.

An American mob is always dangerous, even when composed of the best materials. Our author gives us a very graphic account of the proceedings of such an assembly in Boston a quarter of a century ago; it is instructive reading, since the riot was an anti-abolitionist one, and the city in which it took place is now the centre of abolitionist opinion, and would probably as little tolerate an advocate of the Peculiar Institution now, as it did Mr Garrison in 1834. George Thompson, of the Tower Hamlets and a number of other places, was then in America preaching abolition, and giving lectures in and around Boston; the newspapers of the South were beginning to protest against this, and the merchants of the city to be aroused to the dangers which might arise from such an agitation. Mr Garrison, who published the *Liberator* in an office at the lower end of Washington, did not much care for that. 'He said in his mild way, that "the constitution was an agreement with Death, and a covenant with Hell," and that all slaveholders were thieves and murderers; and he wished to abolish slavery, or failing that, to turn the Southern States out of the Union.' The merchants and bankers of Boston, who were then making their fortunes by Southern cotton, got greatly excited at last, and imagined that if it would not put a stop to abolition to lynch Mr George Thompson, it would, at all events, be a step in the right direction. Believing him to be at the office of the *Liberator*, they therefore tumultuously gathered together like the craftsmen of Ephesus, and demanded that this man should be given up to them, who was threatening their trade. Our author happened to be in the house in question—not purchasing the *Liberator*, however, we may be sure—at the very time. He looked out at the window, and beheld a wonderful spectacle; hundreds, nay, thousands of persons dressed in black broadcloth; a mob of capitalists, of the first people in Boston, which then, as now, considered itself the

'nicest of cities.' They were shouting 'Thompson, Thompson,' as if they wanted that gentleman very much, but with no intention of presenting him with a piece of plate.

Mr Garrison was writing at his desk. He was very calm about it, having been in a state of chronic martyrdom for several years. He came, however, to the window, and having poked his shining bald head out of it, and looked down on the howling crowd below, advised our author not to expose himself to observation, lest these polite fanatics might mistake him for the object of their search. Some anti-slavery ladies were holding a meeting in the house, and they were requested to leave it, which they did, not without jeering and scoffing from the multitude, but still free from personal molestation. Mr Garrison quietly informed the assembly that Mr Thompson was not at home; he had unfortunately left in the morning to visit a friend in the country; otherwise, doubtless he would have been charmed to have presented himself. There was a roar of disappointed rage, and then the whole fury of the crowd in one instant turned upon the editor of the *Liberator*. 'Had they all been constant readers of his paper, they could not have been more violent.' There was a frightful cry for Garrison. It was a dangerous moment for that gentleman indeed. Policemen there were none, and the flower of the militia were on the spot, and foremost in the mischief. The eloquence of the mayor and of the city marshal were exerted in the cause of Order in vain. They dragged Garrison forth. Our author beheld him, 'his hat off, his bald head shining, his scanty locks flying, his face pale, his clothes torn and dusty, and a rope round his neck'—a brave man under very adverse circumstances indeed. 'To the Common—to the Common,' shouted the mob. It was their intention to hang him upon the Tree of Liberty in Boston Park, where Quakers had been hanged in the Puritan days, and under which Tories had been tarred and feathered before the Revolution. But to get there, they had to pass by the City Hall, in which was the mayor's office. At the moment Garrison was brought opposite to this point, the mayor, with a dozen strong fellows or so to back him, dashed into the crowd, striking right and left, gallantly seized the intended victim, and carried him within doors. From thence he was removed to Leverett Street Jail, and held there in safety.

'This was in Boston less than thirty years ago; Boston, where Phillips has lectured, and Parker preached, and which sends Charles Sumner a senator to Washington.'

Yet opinion is scarcely more free in America now than it was then. 'A newspaper which goes against public opinion,' remarks our author coolly, 'is liable to be mobbed.' This is perhaps, after all, but a benevolent provision to check the growth of the press in America, which is already luxuriant even to raukness. There are probably more newspapers in America than in all the world beside.

'In the United Kingdom, there are about 50 daily papers. In 1861, there were 450 in the United States. There were, besides, 4000 weekly papers, and 356 monthlies and semi-monthlies. The state of New York, with a population of less than four millions, or something more than half that of Ireland, has 851 periodicals, 72 of which are daily papers. Imagine 150 daily papers in Ireland! Even the new state of

California on the Pacific has 17 daily papers, 87 weeklies, and eleven monthlies!'

With respect to daily papers, New York is a true metropolis, in comparison with which all other cities are provincial. Before the war, St Louis, New Orleans, and Mobile were regularly supplied with bundles of New York dailies, whereas even those of Boston are seldom seen out of the New England states. The weeklies and monthlies of the latter city circulate, however, much more widely, and those of Philadelphia surpass those of New York itself. The number of Southern newspapers seems to be as great in proportion to the population as in the North, but they are higher in price, and probably have a smaller circulation. The most widely circulated 'daily' in America is the *New York Herald*. Its proprietor, Mr Bennett, makes extraordinary exertions to secure exclusive intelligence. Whenever anything remarkable is about to take place, his first act is to take possession of the telegraph.

'When the Prince of Wales was expected at Niagara Falls, Mr Bennett instructed his reporter to secure the wires. This could only be done by keeping them at work, on the principle of "first come first served," but there was nothing to report. The reporter therefore asked what he should do.'

"Send on the Book of Proverbs," was the reply.

'The Book of Proverbs concluded, the reporter added to the last verse: "No sign of the prince—what next?"'

"Give us Ecclesiastes," was the answer; and the operators were kept at their long and unusual Scripture lesson at a heavy price, until the cannon thundered, and the long expected heir of England's throne came in sight of the great cataract.'

Nobody but a Yankee would ever have dreamed of transmitting *Ecclesiastes* by telegraph. Certainly they are a most humorous people. Periodicals whose trade is fun, like our own *Punch*, do not succeed in America, for the simple reason, that every paper has more or less fun in it, even the most religious ones. The fashionable preachers say things that would empty a London church for the season. We should think them irreverent, whereas that does not seem to be the case by any means. We really dare not transcribe an extract, from one of the Rev. Mr Finney's sermons, culled by our author, but perhaps we may instance this sentence, which occurred in his public prayers. He is conversing with his Creator, as it appears, but in the presence of his own congregation: 'O Lord, I have been walking down Broadway to-day, and I have seen a good many of my friends and Thy friends, and I wondered, O Lord, if they seemed as poor and vapid and empty and worldly to Thee as they did to me.' Surely Mr Spurgeon is a delicate Mayfair dilettante preacher compared with such a clergyman as this!

It is only divines who obtain popularity in America without having first obtained it in Europe, and especially in England. The native members of all other professions—actors, singers, writers—require foreign endorsement to insure their success. The last class has to contend against terrible odds. He has to sell his own wares in competition with stolen goods, generally of a far better quality; the struggle is hopeless, unless he makes his writings smack of the soil. Thus, Cooper, Lowell, Longfellow, Whittier, and others, although men of undeniable genius, would scarcely have succeeded in their

own country had they not 'Americanised' their works—made them smell of the oil-well. The absence of an international copyright law is a cruel blight to American talent; but the spry publishers who get their wares for nothing have too powerful a voice in Congress to suffer us to hope that the wrong will readily be done away with. Besides, the American public like cheap books. 'The readers of the works of Dickens and Thackeray,' writes our author drily, 'were very anxious to see these gentlemen when they visited America; but I have never heard of any anxiety to pay them in solid coin for the pleasure and profit they may have derived from their writings.' There is one method, and one only, by which the American public can be got to read a production of their fellow-countrymen in preference to any other—namely, if they can but be persuaded that some enormous sum has been paid by the publisher for the work in question. The *Weekly Ledger* was a failure until its proprietor gave Fanny Fern twenty pounds a column, and advertised the fact upon every available space in New York. The circumstance was commented upon in three thousand newspapers or so, and read by millions of readers. Everybody wanted to see the paper that could afford to pay such a price [which it could not at all]. The *Ledger* went up at once to a circulation of 300,000; and Mr Bonner has ever since remunerated his writers at sensation prices.

Dr Nichols's vein is, as has been seen, for the most part satirical, but not always. He sometimes indulges in a burst of deserved enthusiasm respecting the land from which he has withdrawn himself; not without reason, for instance, he dilates upon the facilities of American locomotion.

'I really think a first-class steamer on Long Island Sound, the river Hudson, the great lakes, the Ohio, or Mississippi, one of the finest of human inventions. A first-class Hudson River-boat is 400 feet long. Its paddle-wheels are sixty feet in diameter. It draws only four feet water, and glides along the waters of one of the finest rivers in the world, and through scenery of ever-varying beauty and grandeur, at the rate of twenty-four miles an hour. There are a thousand passengers lounging in the great saloons, or reading under the awning on deck, but no crowd. When the dinner-bell rings, they all find seats at the long ranges of tables in the great cabin. They are served with every luxury of the season, from the soup and fish to the fruit and ice-cream. And the trip of 160 miles, including that sumptuous dinner, has cost seven shillings.'

Dr Nichols stands up like a man for his nation, and we like him all the better for it. There is not a word to mar the gorgeous picture which has just been represented to us. But in another part of his second volume, he owns that the males in the above elegant throng are far from pleasant company. Almost everybody chews tobacco, and nobody is nice about disposing of the superfluous saliva. What, therefore, to a sensitive traveller becomes of all this boasted comfort and magnificence? It is no more welcome than a splendid mahogany bedstead with inhabitants in the carved woodwork thereof. 'Spitting is the vice of America, and it is universal. The judge chews and spits upon the bench, the lawyer at the bar, the doctor at the bedside of his patient [Fancy!], and the minister in the pulpit [Heavens!]. In the still pauses of an impassioned oration, I have heard a patter shower upon the floor. It was in a rude frontier

town. I have sneezed from the tobacco-dust raised by the applause—the stamping of feet—in a fashionable theatre.'

Upon the whole, I am afraid it is evident, from every possible point of view—political, literary, religious, social—that our American cousins are what we call Vulgar—in its worse sense—to the backbone. Our author, however, contends that all Yankees do not at least talk through their nose ; or if they do, that they need not. They broaden their speech, he assures us, as they go West, until on the Mississippi they tell you, 'that are heaps of bar over thar, whar I was raised.' Even this is not elegant.

LOST SIR MASSINGBERD.

CHAPTER XXVIII.—A BENEVOLENT STRANGER.

HAVING written to Mr Vanderseld of Hamburg, there was nothing, pending the reception of his reply, for even Mr Townshend to do beyond his favourite occupation of keeping his eyes open. We advertised, however, in the *Morning Chronicle* (a print that at that time was far from looking forward to death from want of circulation, and the having its eyes closed by a penny-piece), in the *Times*, and in the *Sun*, and offered a reward of one hundred guineas for tidings of the missing baronet; nor, in spite of the Bow Street Runner's depreciating remarks upon this point, were our efforts in that direction wholly thrown away. A full description of Sir Massingberd had appeared in the above newspapers for ten successive days, and on the eleventh, the following information came of it. We were all breakfasting in Harley Street, Mr Long having come up from Fairburn the previous day, when the butler informed us that there was a man waiting in the hall, who wished to see 'H. G.', who had put a certain advertisement into the *Sun* newspaper. 'Shew him in here at once, George,' quoth Mr Gerard, rubbing his hands. 'How pleased I shall be if we learn what we wish to know, after all, without any help from Bow Street.—I beg you will take a chair, sir.' These last words were addressed to a very respectable-looking person, whom the servant had ushered in, and who bowed to us in a very decorous and unassuming fashion. He was attired in half-mourning, and carried a little black leather bag and an umbrella—the latter a less common companion in these days than a cane is now—as though he had just come off a journey.

'I have called, gentlemen,' said he, 'simply in consequence of seeing a notice respecting the disappearance of a certain individual of whose whereabouts I am in a position to inform you.'

'Is Sir Massingberd Heath alive, sir?' gasped Marmaduke.

'Heaven be praised, he is, sir,' responded the stranger fervently.

'Umph,' ejaculated Mr Gerard with less piety.

Mr Long coughed behind his fingers, but otherwise kept a discreet silence.

'You know him, do you, sir?' inquired our host.

'I know him well enough by sight, if, at least, your advertised description of his personal appearance is accurate,' resumed our visitor. 'His height, his beard, the curious indentation upon his forehead, are all characteristic of the man whom I saw last night, and whom I have seen every day for weeks. He is living under the name of Daneton

at Nutgall, a village in Cambridgeshire, near which I reside. I have not the slightest doubt whatever of his identity. As for knowing him, except by sight, however, I cannot say that I do. Without meaning offence, or wishing to hurt the feelings of relations, I may observe that his mode of life is scarcely one to make acquaintance with him advantageous. If I may speak without reserve upon the matter, I should state that he drank considerably, to the extent, indeed, the landlord of the inn has informed me, of, at least, a bottle and a half of French brandy *per diem*.'

'That must be my uncle,' observed Marmaduke naively.

'He is so, sir, without a doubt,' continued the stranger. 'I do not seek for any pecuniary reward ; but having seen your advertisement, I thought it my duty to come up hither, and relieve the feelings of anxious relatives.'

Here the door opened, and Mr Townshend walked in unannounced, as it was his custom to do. Merely nodding to us all, as though he was an inmate of the house, he sat down at the table with his back to the visitor, and helped himself to a roll and butter.

Mr Gerard explained briefly the stranger's errand to the officer of justice, and then observed : 'Are we to understand, then, that you have been so good as to come all the way from Nutgall hither expressly to give us this information ?'

'No, sir,' responded the man with frankness ; 'I should deceive you if I were to say that much. I have business in the City to-day, and arrived so far by coach ; I came on hither, merely a few miles beyond my mark ; that is all for which you are indebted to me.'

'That is a great deal,' observed Mr Long warmly. 'We take it very kindly that you should have done so much.'

'I thought it only my duty, sir,' replied the visitor modestly. 'The trouble I do not take into account.'

'What a pity the gentleman did not think of writing by the post,' observed Mr Townshend, still proceeding with his breakfast ; 'that would have saved him this long expedition, and us many days of anxiety.'

'That is very true,' returned the stranger ; 'but the fact is, one does not always like to answer advertisements in that way. How did I know who H. G. was? I thought also that a personal interview would be more satisfactory. I am a poor man, but I did not grudge the chance of losing an hour or two on an errand of charity.'

'You are very good,' answered Marmaduke gloomily.

'And you must, please, permit us,' added Mr Long, taking out his purse, 'to at least reimburse you for that loss of time.'

'It seems to me,' observed Mr Townshend, speaking with his mouth full, 'that this gentleman is about to be rather hardly dealt by. It is true that a guinea, or even half a one, may repay him for his lost time ; but if his intelligence respecting Sir Massingberd Heath turns out to be such as he represents it, he will be entitled to the hundred guineas' reward.'

'I never thought of that,' observed Mr Long, returning his purse to his pocket not without a blush. 'I hope, sir, that you will acquit me of any sordid design in what I proposed to do.'

'Most certainly, sir,' returned the stranger with animation; 'and indeed your views, as you just expressed them, are quite in accordance with my own. I have no wish whatever for the reward in question; to have done my duty is, I hope, a sufficient recompense for me. On the other hand, I cannot well afford to lose these two or three hours which have been expended in your service. A couple of guineas would quite repay me for this, and even leave the obligation upon my side.'

There was a silence for a little, during which Mr Long gazed inquiringly at Mr Gerard, and he, in his turn, looked towards Mr Townshend; then, as though the back of that gentleman's head had been cognizant that counsel was demanded of it, the Bow Street Runner spoke as follows:

'It would be nothing less than a fraud, in my opinion, if this good gentleman's generosity is taken advantage of in the way he suggests. If the management of this business is to be in my hands, I should say let us behave with rectitude at least, if not with liberality. The hundred guineas are fairly his, if he is correct in what he has told us; whereas, if he is *not* correct—since no mistake can have occurred in the matter, by his own showing—why, this is merely an attempt to extort money under false pretences.'

'Really, Mr Townshend,' cried my tutor, starting to his feet, 'I think your profession of thief-catching makes you very unscrupulous in your imputations.'

For my own part, I felt excessively indignant too; and so, I think, would Marmaduke have done, had he not been preoccupied with his own thoughts. Lucy blushed, and cast down her eyes. Her father quietly observed: 'Mr Townshend may have been somewhat plain-spoken, but what he has said is common sense. If you will be good enough to leave your address at Nutgall with us, sir, we shall communicate with you as soon as we have convinced ourselves of the truth of your suspicions; and then we shall not only have compensation but apologies to offer you.'

'Very good, sir,' rejoined the visitor coolly. 'My address is upon that card. If I had known the sort of reception that awaited me here, I should not, perhaps, have been so anxious to do my duty. Gentlemen, I wish you good-day. I am sorry to have interrupted your repast.'

'Don't mention it, my good sir,' observed the Bow Street Runner, as he disposed of his third slice of ham. 'I have treated you as no stranger, I assure you.'

To this sarcasm the visitor made no reply, but bowing to the rest of the company, was about to withdraw with polite severity, when Mr Long stepped forward, and took him by the hand. 'I believe you are a kindly-hearted man,' cried he, 'who has been grievously wronged by those whom you have attempted to benefit; if it be so, it cannot do you any harm to have shaken hands with an honest man, and one who is a humble minister of the gospel.'

I could have jumped up and shaken hands with the stranger also, but a false shame prevented me. I thought that Townshend was only waiting for the poor fellow to go to become contemptuously cynical upon those who had shewn any belief in him. The Bow Street Runner, however, said never a word, but proceeded with his interminable breakfast.

Mr Long was speechless with indignation. I saw Lucy Gerard cast an approving glance at my excellent tutor, and then an imploring one towards her father, who was biting his lips, as if to restrain his laughter.

At last, the rector broke silence. 'I gather from what you have stated, Mr Townshend, that you will scarcely consider it worth while to go down to Nutgall, or make any further inquiry into the circumstances of which you have just heard.'

'It will certainly not be worth *my* while,' returned the Bow Street Runner curtly.

'Then I shall go down into Cambridgeshire myself,' observed my tutor.

'Very good, sir. If time were less valuable to me, it would give me a great deal of pleasure to accompany you.'

'My dear Peter,' remarked my tutor, taking no notice of this wicked banter, 'what do you say to coming with me?'

Even if I had been less disposed to do this than I was, I should still have readily consented to be the rector's travelling companion, for to refuse would have been to declare myself upon the enemy's side.

Accordingly, we set off upon this amateur detective expedition that very day; and on the following evening returned to Harley Street, having possessed ourselves of this important information—That Benevolence is sometimes assumed for the base purpose of making a few shillings, and that advertisements are occasionally taken advantage of to the confusion of those who insert them. There was really a village called Nutgall; that was the one fact that the respectable person in half-mourning had brought along with his black leather bag and silk umbrella; but there was not a public-house in the place where Sir Massingberd could have procured that bottle and a half of French brandy, had he been ever so disposed to dissipation, or even where we ourselves could get bread and cheese.

I verily believe, at the time of his disengagement, my revered tutor would rather that the baronet had been really at Nutgall, and in the humour and condition to wage implacable war against poor Marmaduke, than have given such an opportunity of triumph to the man of Bow Street.

CHAPTER XXIX.—BETTER THAN A BLUNDERBUSS.

It was the Runner's custom to call at Mr Gerard's every evening—no matter how often he might have been there during the day—in order to report progress, or that there was none; and when his knock at the front-door was heard, I perceived the rector wince upon his chair, like one who has been roasted a little already, and expects to be before the fire again immediately. Mr Townshend, however, did not even so much as allude to our Will-of-the-Wisp pursuit, cautioned, perhaps, not to do so by our host, or besought by his daughter, as I fancy. I do not think that the gravity of the intelligence he brought with him would, of itself, have blunted Mr Townshend's appetite for acrimonious jesting, which was insatiable; and, indeed, the issues of Death or Life, and of Lost or Found, formed so much the ordinary business of his life, that any Discovery, no matter of what nature, disturbed him as little as finding a gentleman with his head off disturbs the king of Dahomey.

'Well, Mr Long, I am glad to see you back again,' said he; 'you are the very man I want. Does a farmer of the name of Arable happen to reside in or near your parish?'

'He lives at Fairburn, within a stone's throw.'

'You will never make a Bow Street Runner,' interrupted Mr Townshend, shaking his head.

'Well, then,' continued my tutor good-humouredly, 'if accuracy is so essential, I will say within half a mile and a few yards of my own Rectory.'

'That is better, sir,' returned the detective gravely. 'And what sort of a character do you consider this man to bear?'

'Mr Arable is an honest man and a good churchman,' replied the rector positively; 'and but for a little occasional excess—'

'A drunkard, eh?' observed the Bow Street officer briskly.

'No, certainly not, Mr Townshend. He takes too much liquor now and then, I believe; but I regret to say it, there are few more sober persons in my parish than Richard Arable.'

'Indeed,' observed the other reflectively; 'and yet he was the man who paid No. 82979 to Mr Vanderseld, who trades in grain. I have heard from Hamburg, and have traced the note back again to Fairburn. I start for that place this evening by postchaise; and if you or Mr Mere-dith want a lift, I shall be happy to take one or both of you along with me.'

This intelligence astonished us all immensely, and my tutor and myself, who knew the farmer, more than the rest. Such news would have been sufficient itself to have taken the rector home at once; besides, he was not only anxious, as usual, to get back to his own parish, but somewhat grudged our long-continued absence and intellectual holiday. There did not seem, too, to be any sort of necessity for my remaining longer with Marmaduke, who had found, it was impossible to doubt, a companion far more capable of upholding and encouraging him than I. The Bow Street Runner's offer was therefore accepted by both of us; and in a few hours we took our seats in the same vehicle for Midshire. The chaise was as roomy a one as could be procured, but still, as there was but one seat, I had to assume the position of 'bodkin' between my two companions. Their conversation was at first entirely confined to the subject of our expedition—namely, Farmer Arable, concerning whom the detective expressed his suspicions the more darkly, the more extravagantly he was eulogised by Mr Long. So vehement was their dispute, that I did not like to interrupt it for a considerable period, during which I endured great inconvenience from sitting upon a substance at once both sharp and hard, contained in one of Mr Townshend's pockets. If he had been a lady of the present day, I should have known what it was, and perhaps have modestly suffered on without remonstrance; but since he was not of the softer sex, and certainly did not wear crinoline, I ventured to ask what it was which inflicted such torture.

'I beg your pardon, young gentleman,' observed the Bow Street Runner, removing the article objected to: 'you was only sitting upon a pair of bracelets with which I may have perhaps to present Mr Richard Arable.'

'You don't mean to say that you carry hand-

cuffs in your pocket!' observed my tutor, with a shudder of disgust.

'I mean to say I do, and should as soon think of moving about without 'em, as without my hat and breeches,' returned the Runner, with a coolness that froze us both into a protracted silence.

The rain fell heavily as the night drew on, and dashed against the streaming panes with fitful violence. The wind and wet poured in together whenever the window was put down to pay the postboys. I pitied the poor fellows, exposed to such weather, and was glad to see that Mr Townshend paid them liberally. 'There are no persons who are more open-handed travellers than your Bow Street Runner,' observed Mr Long, when I remarked to him upon this circumstance in the absence of our friend, who had stepped out while we were changing horses somewhere, for brandy and water; 'and the reason of their generosity is this, that other people have to pay for it.' I had never heard my tutor utter so severe a speech, and I gathered from it that his indignation against our fellow-wayfarer was as poignant as ever; and yet within half an hour it was fated that all his resentment should be neutralised by gratitude, leaving a large margin of the latter sentiment over and above.

The next stage was over a desolate, treeless heath, where the elements had their own way against us more than ever, and our vehicle seemed actually to shrink and shudder from the force of their onslaught. All of a sudden, I was thrown forward against the opposite window by the stoppage of the postchaise. At first I thought a horse had fallen; but immediately afterwards the window next to Mr Long was violently pushed down from without, and a something black and small, which was a pistol, was protruded into the carriage.

'Your money or your life! Come, be quick, curse you, and don't keep gentlemen waiting in the wet,' said a rough voice. 'Be quick, I say.' A volley of oaths accompanied this unpleasant request.

'I have only a couple of guineas with me,' cried Mr Long quietly, 'and you will not make it more by swearing.'

'That's a lie!' remarked the voice very uncivilly, 'for you're a parson, you are, and they've always money enough.—Ain't he a parson, postboy? Didn't you say so, when I asked you who you'd got inside there? Come here, won't yer?'

At these words, one of the wretched postboys, shivering and dripping, came forward to the window, and stammered out: 'Really, gentlemen, I couldn't help it; he swore as he'd blow out my brains, if I didn't tell; so I told him as one was a clergyman, I believed, but the other two—'

'My name is Townshend,' interrupted the Bow Street Runner with great distinctness. 'If you had happened to know that, boy, and had informed these gentlemen of the circumstance, I am sure they would never have stopped us, unless, indeed, it was to inquire after my health.' At the same time he thrust his broad face out of the window into the light thrown by a lantern carried by one of the robbers; for there were several dim forms on horseback, as I could now perceive. If a blunderbus had been exhibited instead, it could not have caused one-half of the panic which the sight of his features occasioned; each robber turned his back at once, as though to prevent the recognition being mutual, and spurred away into the darkness,

leaving nothing but the dismounted postboy to evidence that they were not mere phantoms of the night.

'Get to your saddle, and make you up for lost time,' said the Runner sternly ; and when this mandate had been obeyed, and we were once more on our way, he added : 'That postboy sold us ; I saw him whispering to a man on horseback in the inn-yard while I was taking some drink in the back-parlour : he was never asked any question when the chaise was stopped. That was Jerry Atherton, too, who put his shooting-iron in at that window ; I should know his voice though a mob were shouting with him. A man who wishes to do something of which the consequences are so very serious, should not only wear crape, but keep his mouth shut.'

'We have to thank you very much, I am sure,' said Mr Long. 'It was a great providence for us that you were with us.'

'Very likely, sir,' returned Mr Townshend grimly ; 'but not for Jerry, nor yet for the postboy.'

A PROSPEROUS TRADE-UNION.

MUCH has been done of late years to improve the condition of the working-classes, and the working-man of the present generation enjoys many advantages that were beyond the reach of his less fortunate brethren of former times. The tommyshop system of robbery has been abolished, and the payment of workmen's wages in public-houses rendered illegal. Government enactments and inspections have compelled those who employ men in dangerous occupations to take proper precautions for insuring the safety of those employed ; and the law now provides against the overworking of children of tender years. Mechanics' and other institutions of a similar character have been established ; beautiful parks have been thrown open to the city-pent communities, and a variety of other means taken with a view of elevating the intellectual faculties and social position of the working-man.

But though a wise legislature has suppressed many of the abuses to which the working-classes were formerly subjected, and though private philanthropy and public benevolence have striven, and with a considerable amount of success, to improve both their mental and physical condition, yet they (the working-classes) are fully and wisely convinced that it is principally to themselves they must trust if they wish to permanently rise in the social scale, or to be prepared, as far as their circumstances make it possible, to meet those fluctuations in trade by which they are so often severe sufferers. This feeling led many thoughtful working-men to consider how they might best help themselves and the class to which they belonged, and gave rise to the movement which has culminated in the present gigantic system of trade-unions.

Trade-unions, like other institutions, have their opponents, and some of these assert that 'trade-societies' are unjust monopolies ; that they encourage strikes, and foster a spirit of insubordination among workmen. But such assertions as these are extreme, and are generally made by interested parties, or those who know very little about the subject. Cases can, of course, be brought forward in which men who belonged to trade-unions have

attempted to destroy establishments into which some 'new-fangled' machinery, which for a time had thrown some of them out of work, had been introduced, and others in which they have ill-treated persons who were obnoxious to 'the trade' ; and no doubt instances could be pointed out in which a few lazy, brawling, pot-house orators have induced the members of a trade-union to strike for some very slight, if not altogether imaginary cause, and to hold out, despite the remonstrances of their real friends, after they have struck. Such cases as these always occur among men with whom the true principle of trade-union has been but very imperfectly developed ; and no one deplores and condemns them more sincerely than do the thinking and educated members of the trade-unions. That trade-unions, if upon a comprehensive scale, and conducted in a business-like manner, are extremely beneficial to their members, and favourable to the interests of the employers of those members, will be amply demonstrated by an account of the formation, objects, progress, and present condition of one of the strongest, best conducted, and most successful of these unions—The Amalgamated Society of Engineers, Machinists, Millwrights, and Pattern-makers.' The trades incorporated in this Society bear about the same relation to each other as do those of the bricklayer, carpenter, and stone-mason in the building-trade ; and members of each branch are generally employed in every workshop where locomotive, marine, or stationary engines, or any of the numerous machines at present in use, are manufactured or repaired.

Previous to the year 1851, each of these trades had a society of its own, into which only members of that particular trade were admitted ; but as the advantages of the union principle became more fully apparent, the members of these societies, finding that their interests were identical, resolved to further develop the system of trade-unions by uniting their respective bodies, and forming one large one. On January 1, 1851, this union accordingly took place, and they then assumed their present title of the 'Amalgamated Society.' Their objects are thus set forth in the preamble which precedes their rules. 'The object of this Society is to raise from time to time, by contributions among the members thereof, funds for the purpose of mutual support in case of sickness, accident, superannuation, emigration, for the burial of members and their wives, and also for assistance to members out of work.' Concerning the management of the Society, the preamble says : 'For the benefit of its members, it shall be divided into branches, which shall be appointed in such numbers and districts as may be deemed necessary in conformity with the rules provided for that purpose. Every branch of this Society shall appoint its own officers, and conduct its own business in the manner set forth in the following rules.' The rules are thirty-five in number, are all drawn up in plain language, and provide for every conceivable contingency. From these rules, we learn the system by which the Society is managed, the qualifications necessary for membership, the benefits to be derived from it, and the sum each member has to pay to participate in those benefits. The branches of the Society are conducted by presidents, secretaries, stewards, and treasurers ; and in branches where the number of members make it necessary, vice-

presidents and assistant-secretaries are added. The presidents, vice-presidents, and treasurers fulfil the usual duties of such officers; and the steward takes charge of the book which is used as a check upon the secretary. The principal duties of the secretary are to receive, enter, and sign for the contributions of the members; to see to the payment of members who are entitled to any of the benefits of the Society; and to conduct the correspondence incidental to his office. He must write to the general secretary of the Society at least once a month, and within the first six days of each month, 'reporting the state of trade in his district, the number and profession of the members out of employment, and the probability of men being wanted.'

From these reports, the general secretary compiles a monthly report of the state of trade throughout the country, and a copy of this report is furnished to the secretary of each branch. Secretaries are thus often in a position to materially assist members who may be out of employment, as from the monthly report they can at once inform them where trade is good or bad, and where men of any particular trade are wanted. The books of each branch are audited every quarter by members who are elected (as are all the officers of the Society) by the remaining members of the branch; and each secretary has to forward the quarterly accounts of his branch, duly signed by the auditors, to the office of the general secretary. There is an executive council, consisting of twenty-five members, who are appointed from as many different branches, and are elected by the members of those branches. This council acts for the Society in cases of emergency, fulfils the functions of a court of appeal, and appoints auditors to examine the books, receipts, &c., of the general secretary, and report upon the state of the same to the council. The central office of the Society is in London, and its business is conducted by the general secretary, whose time is exclusively devoted to the affairs of the Society. Such is an outline of the general system upon which this Society is conducted—a system that, after twelve years' experience, has been found eminently satisfactory and successful, and which has been productive of the most beneficial results. In a Society like this, 'union is strength,' the greater the number of members, the greater will be its stability and importance, and it is to the interests of all members to enrol as many as possible in their Society. But still it is necessary to the continuance and well-being of the Union that each person admitted should be a 'fit and proper' one; and to insure this, each candidate for admission must be possessed of certain qualifications, which are set forth in the rules of the Society.

No person is admitted who is under twenty, or above forty years of age, except in the case of candidates who have formerly been members of the Society, and who wish to rejoin it, in which case they are admitted up to the age of forty-five years. No person is eligible for admission unless he has worked five years successively at the trade which he professes, or has served five years to it before the age of twenty-one. Each candidate for admission must be proposed, seconded, and recommended by two members of the branch which he wishes to join; the proposer and seconder must be prepared to state (and

if necessary, prove by evidence) that the party whose election they are proposing is possessed of good abilities as a workman, is of steady habits, and good moral character; and every one who is elected must be a member twelve months before he is entitled to the benefits of the Society. The avowed objects of this Society are to render support to its members in cases of sickness, accident, &c., and likewise to give them assistance when out of work; and we will now proceed to shew how these objects are carried out.

First, with regard to members who are out of work, the rules of the Society provide that, 'should any free member be thrown out of employment under circumstances satisfactory to the branch to which he belongs . . . he shall be entitled to the sum of 10s. per week for fourteen weeks, 7s. per week for thirty, and 6s. per week so long as he remains out of employment—making a total of L19, 18s. in one year.' And these donations are so calculated that no member can receive more than that sum in any one year; though it seldom occurs that members are out of employment for so great a length of time as a year, when trade is in anything like an average state of briskness. If a member who is out of work wishes to travel in search of employment, he receives from the secretary of the branch to which he belongs a travelling card, which is filled up in accordance with rules existing for that purpose. This card establishes the identity of the travelling member, and enables him to draw the donation which is due to him in any town in which there is a branch of the Society; and the secretary of each branch which he may visit directs him to where he (the secretary) thinks he is most likely to find employment. The rules of the Society provide for the distribution of its other benefits in an equally just and comprehensive manner. Any member who, in consequence of sickness or lameness, is unable to follow his ordinary employment, must send a written notice to that effect to the secretary of his branch within three days of his indisposition; and he is then entitled to a sum of 10s. per week for 26 weeks, and 5s. per week for as much longer as he may continue ill. Provision is likewise made for members who may fall sick while travelling in search of employment; and should the exigencies of the case require it, the officers of the branch in which any travelling member falls sick, apprise the friends of the sick member of his condition, and send the member to those friends at the expense of the Society. Any member who, through accident, blindness, imperfect vision, apoplexy, epilepsy, or paralysis, is rendered incapable of following any of the branches of trade connected with the Society, receives the sum of L100.* Members who are fifty years of age or upwards, and who have been eighteen successive years in the Society (the time to count from the date of their entrance into the Society of which they were members previous to the amalgamation), and who are not in regular employment, can, if they choose to apply for it, have a retiring allowance of 7s. per week for life. At the death of a member, his widow or next of kin receives the sum of L12 to defray his funeral expenses; or, at the death of his wife, any member,

* It is of course provided that no member shall receive this or the sick benefit if the accident has been caused through, or the disease brought on by, intemperance, or other improper conduct of the member.

by applying for it, may receive the sum of L.5, leaving L.7 to be paid to his representatives at his own decease. In addition to these specified benefits, there is a benevolent fund (taken out of the general funds of the Society), and from this fund any particular or unusual case of distress is relieved, upon the recommendation of the branch to which the distressed member belongs.

The revenue of the Society is derived from the entrance-fees and contributions of its members, each member upon his admission into the Society having to pay an entrance-fee varying from 15s. to L.3, 10s., according to his age at the time of entrance; and all members, when in employment, pay a fixed contribution of one shilling per week. Thus, for a weekly payment of one shilling, the working mechanic can assure himself of assistance when out of employment, or in case of sickness or accident; he entitles himself to a pension, should he be unable to work in his old age; and he has the pleasing assurance that at his death the last rites of humanity will be decently carried out. Small as this contribution of one shilling per week may appear for carrying out so many benevolent purposes, it is, nevertheless, amply sufficient when a feeling of co-operation animates the directors and members of such institutions. The Society of which we have been speaking annually issues a blue-book, which, for accuracy and completeness, is equal to anything of the kind that leaves the press. The one for 1863 is now before us, and from this we gather some interesting facts concerning the operations and extent of the Society, which have an interest for all classes, as they serve to shew what can be effected by association. At the close of the first year of the amalgamation of the several societies which now form the present one, the total number of members was 11,829; and in December 1862, the numbers had increased to 24,234. The Society, at the date of the report from which we are quoting (which gives the transactions of the Society from December 1861 to December 1862), consisted of 249 branches, 201 of which were in England and Wales, 27 in Scotland, 9 in Ireland, 5 in Canada, 4 in Australia, 2 in America, and 1 in Malta.

Owing to the 'cotton famine' and other causes, the year 1862 was one of the most disastrous in the annals of trade, and the calls upon the funds of the Society were consequently much larger than the average of former years, the total expenditure of the Society for that year amounting to L.63,565, 18s. 5*½*d., being L.2, 12s. 5*½*d. per member; since 1853, the greatest expenditure ever reached in one year, previous to 1862 only came to L.1, 13s. 10*½*d. per member; while some years it did not amount to even half of that sum per member. But notwithstanding the great demand upon the resources of the Society in 1862, they had at the end of that year a fund of L.67,615, 16s. 6d. in hand. The principal items of expenditure for the year were: Donations to members out of work, L.38,881, 16s. 4*½*d. Sick benefit, L.10,430, 2s. 7d. Funeral benefit, L.3031. Superannuation benefit, L.2654, 5s. Grants to members who, through accident, blindness, or any of the diseases previously mentioned, have been rendered incapable of following their employment, L.1200, being twelve grants of L.100 each. Grants from the benevolent fund, L.1086, being 241 grants, varying in amount from L.8 to L.2. Working expenses, L.3219, 10s. 3*½*d. This item includes the salaries of

all branch officers, secretaries, auditors, trustees, and the members of the executive council, besides the expenses of all committees and delegations; and when we consider the magnitude and extent of the Society, and the variety of purposes which it fulfils, it is a surprisingly small one. Printing, stationery, postage, and parcels, L.1149, 12s. 4*½*d. Rents, rates, gas, and coal, L.700, 2s. 2d. In looking at this item it must be borne in mind that, in addition to central offices in London and Manchester, each branch of the Society has to rent a room in which to transact its business, and as many of the branches number upwards of 300 members, some of these rooms have to be of tolerably large dimensions. Loans to other trades, L.240; and gifts to other trades, L.154, 11s.

The income of the Society in 1862 was L.57,783, 13s. 11d.; their balance in hand, in December 1861, was L.73,398, 1s. 0*½*d.—making a total of L.131,181, 14s. 11*½*d.—which the Society had in hand to meet the demands upon them in 1862; so that, after paying away in that year the sum of L.63,565, 18s. 5*½*d.—and by far the largest sum ever paid by this or any similar Society in one year—they had a balance in hand of L.67,615, 16s. 6d. The rapid growth and success of this Society, and the important position to which it has attained, are sufficient proofs, if proofs were required, that trade-societies, if conceived in a just and liberal spirit, and carried out with no other object than the protection of the lawful interests, and alleviation of the unavoidable distresses, of their members, are the most beneficial to which a working mechanic can belong. We have said that trade-unions, such as we describe, are favourable to the interests of the employers of their members; and we think that if any unprejudiced person will look at the facts of the case, they will arrive at the same conclusion. In the first place, none are admitted into a trade-union unless they are known to possess good abilities as workmen, and are of steady habits and good moral character; so that, by employing a member of a trade-society, an employer secures a workman possessing those qualifications; and again, any member of a trade-union who is discharged from his employment for misconduct, is debarred from the benefits of the Society till he again finds employment; so that the members of a trade-union have an additional inducement to conduct themselves properly while at work.

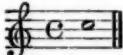
It is often asserted by the opponents of trade-unions, that one of the objects of these societies is to have all workmen, whether good or bad, paid alike; but this is a mistaken notion. All that the rules of such societies insist upon is, that as they admit no one to be a member unless he is possessed of good abilities as a workman, no member must work for less than the average rate of wages paid to members of the same branch of trade in the district in which he is employed.* But they by no means seek to place the *superior* and the only average workman upon an equal footing, as there are superior workmen in all trades who are paid at a considerably higher rate than ordinary workmen. A trade-union, to be worthy of the name, should have nothing in its constitution antagonistic to the just rights or interests of the possessors of capital or

* This same regulation is practically observed among all barristers and physicians of repute.

the employers of labour, but should be conducted solely with a view of assisting its members when suffering under any of the adverse circumstances incidental to the condition of the working-man.

COUNTESS SEMIBREVE.

The Instructive History of the Countess Semibreve and her family; written (for young people) by one of the Sufferers in the late Riots, with Portraits and Illustrations. Price, a Little Attention. Discount for Ready Memory.



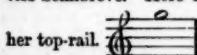
Once upon a time—it was in the good old 'common time,' in the year 1.2.3.4, and the lady of whom I am going to speak dated her letters thus: C, for shortness—there lived a beautiful and accomplished lady, called the Countess Semibreve. Her residence was of a peculiar nature, being neither house nor hall, as beffited her rank and station—neither cottage nor villa, but simply a sort of wooden fence painted black, and consisting of five rails, and on these the worthy lady had to pass her monotonous life. Can you fancy anything more dreary? It is true, it was dignified by the name of Bar Castle. But what was the good of that, when it was not really a castle, you know? Fine names do not make up for want of comfort. The only change she could get was by sometimes sitting on the top-rail of all; then, when her back was tired, coming down, and perching between Nos. 2 and 3, or 3 and 4; and when utterly weary, she would slide to the bottom, and sit on the ground, under the last rail of all. Once—she was very proud of that little invention—she made a sort of swing, into which she might screw one or two more bars, and hang far below the old railing, clinging on to the swing. This also enabled her to enjoy the air, at an elevation far above the top-rail, to which she fixed her little contrivance of extra rods.

O dear, it was a tiresome life! 'Couldn't she ever go to sleep?' did I hear you say. O yes, she often got a nap, but then slid down from her perch quite out of sight, and hung up on one of the rails a black-board, with the word 'Rest' painted on it, that nobody might come and disturb her.



Another circumstance which made the

condition of Madame Semibreve unlike that of other ladies, was that she had no legs!—no, not so much as an inch! and yet, as you saw her sitting on her perch, you would hardly notice any peculiarity; you would only think she was sitting on her feet, to keep them warm, or conclude that she was of Turkish origin, or that it was the fashion of the country. And now, we must describe her appearance more particularly. Her face was of that perfect oval which painters so much admire, and beamed generally with an expression of the most charming amiability. The extreme openness of her expression was also remarked; and the delicate fringe of light-coloured hair round her face, together with the absence of any very marked features, gave her an appearance of greater youth than your knowledge of her real age led you to expect. When I add, that her musical attainments were considerable, and her voice sweet, I have told you all that it is necessary for you to know about the Countess Semibreve. Here is her picture as she sits upon



her top-rail. Upon her charming countenance sat, however, on the day on which my story

begins, an expression of sullen melancholy, which was most unbecoming. She sat this day upon the lowest rail of all, and a prolonged sob, which sounded like E—E—E, burst from her as she sat.

A stranger passed that way; he was the son of a celebrated old magician, of whom you have no doubt heard, whose name was Aroctefolobel. The talent of this distinguished man had descended to his son; but he was very young, and had not done anything very remarkable as yet; indeed, this was his first journey in search of adventures; and it immediately occurred to him, as the wail of distress met his ear, that he might be of service to the fair mourner; so he drew near, and when he saw the Countess Semibreve, he quite well remembered to have heard of her from his father, and introduced himself immediately as Blumshekelsqueezy, son of Aroctefolobel.

'And what, dear madame, can possibly be the matter with you?' asked Mr B. (as we will call him, to save time, these foreign names are so difficult). 'You seem to me to have nothing to cry about, really! Beauty, talent, a charming residence—so cool and airy in summer-time, commanding such an extensive view of the country and passers-by.'

'O yes,' answered Lady Semibreve; 'I darelasy that is all very true; but the loneliness of it! Oh, Mr B., you don't know what it is to sit perched up here all day long upon an iron rail, with not a creature to talk to, and no sound but your own sad voice singing A—A—A, or E—E—E. Had I but one child to cheer my solitude! Oh, Mr B., if your poor dear father were alive, I am sure he might do something for me—he was so very wise. But I suppose you know nothing about the stars, and that sort of thing.'

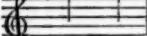
This only shewed how ignorant Lady Semibreve was of all that was going on in the world around her, not to know what a great man Mr B. was. But he was not at all offended, and replied: 'I don't wish to appear conceited, Lady Semibreve, but I will just tell you that I can at anyrate read the stars; so, if it is any comfort to you, I will cast my eyes about me, and see if there is any chance of your having what you so much wish for.' He cast his eyes up to the sky, which was just beginning to be covered with the most beautiful stars, and then looked at a little book he took out of his pocket; this he did several times, and then turning to Lady Semibreve, he said, in a cheerful voice: 'Madame, though I am not so great a conjurer as my father, a few things I do know, and can find out, and one of them is, that your loneliness will be some day relieved, and your wishes fulfilled, and that two charming children will occupy your place upon the rails.—But stop a bit; don't thank me yet. I must forewarn you that all parents have to make some sacrifices for their children; and as I have no doubt you will mind nothing as long as you have them, I must tell you that there is not room on these rails for you and your children together; and you must make up your mind to get down, and go to sleep pretty often, that your children may enjoy the air. I don't even think it will be any use hanging out the word "Rest" when you go to sleep, for nobody will mind it. They will make such a noise, you may give up all thoughts of sleep then. O yes, there are drawbacks; and children, though very amusing when good, are sad plagues sometimes.'

'Oh, don't say so,' answered Lady Semibreve, wild with delight—'I mind nothing! Oh, I am so happy! I only hope it is all true. But now, dear Mr B. (don't go yet, please), you haven't told me half enough about it. What shall I call them?—and what will they be like?—and if I might ask just one more favour—if you would only allow them to have legs: even one apiece would be better than nothing. You can't think how I have suffered all my life from not having any to help me down from one rail to another; I have had

to slide about and bump myself dreadfully, till I am all over bruises sometimes.'

'Well, madame,' said Mr B., 'it is not too much to ask; they shall have a leg apiece. And now about their names; let us think of a pretty name for them. They will be so much alike, that we had better give them almost the same, hadn't we? Suppose we say Minima and Minime? That will be enough to distinguish them apart. They shall be graceful and long-legged, and in all other respects the exact likeness of their charming mother.' And with this pretty speech, and raising his hat politely, Mr B. departed, leaving Lady Semibreve singing with joy in every tone and note from A to G, and hopping up and down the rails for very lightness of heart.

Time passed—some years—ere Mr B. again passed by that way. He looked towards the spot where he had seen Lady Semibreve, to see if she looked any happier now, for he had heard that his prediction had been fulfilled; and there, upon the rails, he saw two charming young ladies, tall and well grown, with pretty oval faces like their mother, and with the same little fringe of flaxen hair as Lady Semibreve: the likeness would have been complete, but for the addition of a leg of matchless symmetry—only one—but then

it was such a straight one!  Mr

B. couldn't help smiling as he looked at it. 'Bless me,' said he, 'I forgot the foot! What will the old lady say to me? By the way, where is she? Fairly eclipsed, as I warned her, I see.—Where is your mamma, young ladies?'

'We will call her,' answered the ladies, Minima and Minime, with charming affability, and disappeared.

Presently, Lady Semibreve took her daughters' place, and smilingly acknowledged that Mr B. had been as good as his word.

'And yet there is a screw loose somewhere, Lady Semibreve,' answered Mr B. 'I detect it in your tone. Have you now anything to complain of? Have you anything else to desire?'

'No,' she said; 'O no. I ought to be very happy. My daughters are, of course, a great comfort to me. They certainly make a good deal more noise than ever I did, I fancy, and keep me out of my proper place in society sometimes; and the dear girls hardly seem to know what *nerves* are; and though I have given them such a nice little board like mine, with "Rest" upon it, to stick upright on the rail, to distin-

guish it from mine , they hardly ever get

off that eternal perch, to let me have a mouthful of fresh air, which I must say I am terribly in want of sometimes. However, I will not complain, for I feel that when one has two dear companions fallen from the sky, as one may say, one can't be too grateful, or prize them too much; and though it must be acknowledged that the flaxen hair is very tame-looking—a great deal too much of it in our family—and I do wish theirs was black; still, as you say, they are very fine-looking girls; and the only thing that prevents their being *quite* handsome, is that silly vacant expression they have—an empty-headed sort of look, if you understand me. Not that I wish to complain—for, of course, they are a great blessing—only I do hope that if ever I have grand-children, they will have *black* hair, and be content to let their elders enjoy themselves sometimes, and sit under the rails *themselves* occasionally, as I have to do now.'

'No, no, Lady Semibreve,' answered Mr B., who began quite to lose his patience with this old grumbler. 'That was a bargain long ago, and you professed yourself quite willing to sink into the shade for your

children's sake; so I really cannot attend to *that* part of your request. The rest I think highly unreasonable; however, as I wish to oblige you, I will arrange, if you like, that any future companions who may fall from the sky shall have *black* heads, and plenty in them. Only, I warn you, you won't enjoy much of their society, for I shall present them to the Ladies Minima and Minime, and I suspect they will only give their grandmamma what time their mammas can spare them; also, I may safely predict, that they will never be allowed to appear in company with *you*, madame, on the rails!—Legs, did I hear you say? Oh, of course,' and he went away feeling very cross.

He came back again—but this time he saw no Lady Semibreve; she was asleep, and he told them not to wake her; but he saw two dear little black-headed things sitting beside the Lady Minima on the lowest

rail  They were too young to

venture higher yet, and she explained that the Lady Minime had just taken *her* two children down, that *she* and *hers* might enjoy the air for a bit—so perfect was the harmony which subsisted between these two charming sisters. He inquired the names of the two little black-haired dears—as he had forgotten to leave directions about that—and found that they had all been named 'Crotchets'—Crotchet 1, Crotchet 2, and so on.

All at once, a cross voice was heard inquiring, how much longer Minima was going to keep her poor mother poked away out of sight; and the obedient daughter immediately signed to her children to follow her, and give place to grandmamma.

'Happy now, Lady Semibreve?' asked Mr B. (though he knew indeed what the answer would be).

'Well, pretty well, thank you. It's grown a noisy place. Used to be quiet enough once—in the days when there was nobody but me. Heigh-ho! I think people will hardly know my name; they don't often see me now. By the way, if ever I am allowed to have great-grandchildren, I hope they will have *feet* as well as legs. I've been thinking a good deal about this lately. The noise those dirty little Crotchets make hopping up and down the rails, quite prevents my having any rest. And as to resting *themselves*! Good gracious! you'd hardly believe, sir, that I've given each of them a pretty little black flag for the very purpose of rest—that they might have a different

signal from their mothers' and mine 

but they won't use it. I declare I wish now they had *no* legs! I did very well without.'

To this piece of ingratitude Mr B. returned no answer, but you may guess what he thought of it; and he fully resolved to request the stars to send down, not only great-grandchildren, but great-great-grandchildren, and even great-great-great-grandchildren, as a punishment for Lady Semibreve's ingratitude and unreasonable conduct. Feet! They should have two feet, three feet, four feet apiece, some of them, to patter up and down with! Poor Lady Semibreve!

Mr B. waited a good number of years till he heard that her family was complete, and her complaints awful to listen to, and then he visited Bar Castle again. As he drew near the rails, he heard a loud noise of running, fighting, and screaming; while the complaints of the neighbours, mingled with the din of feet and voices, almost drowned the voice of Mr B. himself. 'Dear, dear!' said that wise man; 'things have indeed come to a pretty pass. I have

gone further than I intended with the punishment of Lady Semibreve. I must reduce this to some sort of order.' So he stepped up to the bars, where, running about in wild confusion were Quavers, Semiquavers, Demisemiquavers, and Semidemisemiquavers, to the number of 124! so much had the family-party increased since Mr B. last passed by that way. Quite enough to account for the noise! Some of them were fine grown children, some mere babies, but all with feet, some one, some two, some three, and some four! Fancy how these last ran! And this unruly mob of

young people were fighting, screaming, struggling like mad, singing at the top of their voices, all out of time and tune; and drowning each other's noise, and running up and down the bars with all the speed of youth, spirits, and heaps of feet; while the four old Crotchetts (who ought to have known better) were not ashamed to sit up at the top, and superintend the riot of their children. We subjoin a picture of this disgraceful scene, in which you will see that they had even got possession of grandmamma's pet swing.



To the four Crotchetts, Mr B. now addressed himself in stern displeasure—said he could not expect the children to know better when their elders set them such an example—contrasted their conduct with the seemly decorum ever shewn by the gentle Ladies Minim—told them of the complaints he heard all over the country of the hubbub made by the whole family, and ended by desiring that the entire party, old and young, should collect together, that he might address them all at once, and renew the rules he had given them long ago, and which had been so ill observed.

So they all appeared—Lady Semibreve very thin, and paler than ever; the Ladies Minima and Minime weeping bitterly, and protesting it was not their fault—the children were too much for them to manage; the Crotchetts sulky; and the children and grand-children quiet and crestfallen. They all assembled before Mr B., who gave them a sound scolding every one. He touched lightly upon the folly and discontent of Lady Semibreve, which had been the first cause of all this mischief (for he did not wish to set the example of disrespect to age); censured gently the want of firmness shewn by the Ladies Minim in not upholding what they knew to be right; but 'as for the Crotchetts and Quavers,' said he, 'their conduct has been selfish and bad beyond expression, and I will take care they never again treat their poor grandmamma as they have done lately; but they must give her her proper share of light, air, and society, under pain of my severest displeasure!' He looked so furious, and so very like his late powerful papa, as he said these words, that he struck terror into the hearts of all his hearers, and with one voice they promised obedience. He then left with them these rules, which were to restore peace and harmony to Bar Castle, and quiet to the neighbourhood generally.

Firstly. Lady Semibreve was to come out at stated times, and resume her solitary position on the railings. (She was never heard to complain of the *loneliness* again.)

Secondly. The Ladies Minima and Minime might come up by turns, each with *her own two Crotchetts*. ('Better not interfere with each other's children,' said this wise man, 'or there will be quarrels.') Then each mamma was to be answerable for the good-behaviour

of the two Crotchetts. Then Minima



and Minime, if they chose to leave the children at home, might come up together as in the old time; or the four Crotchetts might be sent for a run together,

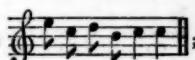
when very good; but then *no mammas*. 'I will not have

any crowding,' said Mr B.



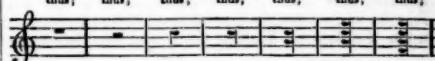
Then in their turn might come forth four little Quavers, with

their two Crotchet mammas



or, again, on a birthday, or any fête of that sort, the eight little Quavers might come and join hands in a dance; for you see they, having feet, could enjoy this pleasure, denied to their elders. Above all, rest at proper intervals, and signals hung out by each member of the family while taking that rest.

Semibreve Minim Crotchet Quaver Semiquaver Demisemiquaver
thus; thus; thus; thus; thus; thus;



'And now one thing more before I forget it: any little person who shall be rude, or disobedient to rules when I am gone, shall be bound over to keep the

peace.



Remember this, Lady Semi-

breve. I trust to you to see it observed. Have you anything to ask me before I go? Little dears, don't be afraid of me; I won't scold you any more.'

A little Semiquaver, who had been for some time peeping furtively into one of Mr B.'s pockets, now timidly advanced, and blushing a good deal, said: 'Please, what are those little black balls in your pocket, sir?'

'My dear child,' exclaimed Mr B., 'how stupid of me; I forgot to give them you. This is what they are for: to keep them safely; and when headache or toothache, or a pain in your big toe, prevents any of you little people keeping your time, and making up the proper number on the fence, you shall throw this up to your mamma, be she Minim, Crotchet, or Quaver, and then she will excuse you while she counts, and pass on to another, considering the little black ball as equal to

one of her dear children.'



'Don't be offended, darlings.'—And now, observe the kindness

of this great man's heart! He fancied he saw on some of the little black faces around him rather a disappointed look, and said to himself: 'Well, poor little creature, it is rather a dull prospect for them: duty and obedience always, and no play; and such a wild nature as they have too! It won't do.' Then turning to the timid little Semiquaver who had inquired about the balls (and who was evidently his favourite), he said: 'Don't be down-hearted, my child; I don't want to be hard upon you. You like play, don't you?'

Semiquaver answered timidly: 'O yes, sir, very much; and I thought, perhaps, the balls in your pocket were for us to play with,' she added, gaining courage from the kind looks of Mr B.; 'but I see we've no time for play, and we are not enough on the rails for playing ball either.' A deep sigh, and half a tear.

'Well, cheer up,' said Mr B., patting her on the head. 'This is what I'll do for you. I can't let you use those balls any way but as I told you; but I'll send you some dolls to play with—yes, little dolls, the very miniature of yourselves; and of course I won't count them as anything, so they may come in and



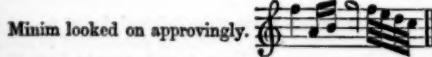
(Here are the dolls; you see they are quite an ornament!)

'But stop! don't run away yet; you must call them by their right names, not dolls. In my country, dolls are called Appoggiatura.'

'O goodness! I can't say that,' cried poor little Semiquaver.

'O yes, try. Appogg—Appogg—Appoggiatura—try every day—you'll soon learn it; and when you can say it nicely, I'll send the dolls! There! make friends. Give me a kiss. Oh, not all together; you'll knock me down.'

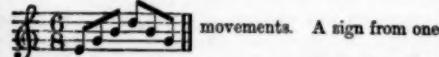
Peace and harmony were now restored; and the wise man, ere he departed, had the pleasure of seeing a pretty, orderly, little dance executed by two Semiquavers and four Demisemiquavers, now all good friends, while a sturdy black-haired little Crotchet sat upon the top-rail beating time, and one fair-haired



Mimin looked on approvingly.

They have never been so naughty since. Changes, indeed, occurred; for Mr B., as a reward of their obedience, kindly and wisely permitted such occasional changes as might make life endurable to this musical family. 'It is no good tying down some people by the same rules for ever,' observed the wise man. So in the year 24, Lady Semibreve disappeared for a time from the scene. She had taken a sudden dislike to Bar Castle, said it was beginning to hurt her health, and applied for a change of rule; so she retired into seclusion (not, however, for good), taking with her one of her Minims and two Crotchets as companions. This was in the year 24, did I not say? and all you saw then upon the black rails were the two eldest Crotchets, and now and then their respective Quavers instead of them.

Again, in 68, an entirely juvenile party was to be seen in the old place. I suppose it must have originated in a birthday of some of the young folks; certainly they had put their parents quite away out of sight, in perfect good-humour though, and there they were! six pretty Quavers going through their little



movements. A sign from one

of them, and they all disappeared, leaving the stage to be occupied by twelve Semiquavers, their children. As for the Semidemisemiquavers, I hardly ever saw them out. I suppose such babies were hardly fit to be trusted on the rails, and with their 4 feet so apt to be tripped up, but all the others came. Time would fail me to tell of all the changes I have seen there!—the year 9.8, 9.12, and 3.4, and so on. I have not, however, forgotten, nor shall to the last day of my life, the pretty sight I witnessed one birthday in Bar Castle, when (by gracious permission of the great man, of course) a triplet dance was executed by the little people, and an extra number kindly allowed to appear (for one night only), to make up the figures, on condition that every extra dancer brought with her a board with the figure 3 upon it, as her passport of entrance, to denote the triplet dance for which she was come; that every one might know, you see, that it was only once in a way.

All discord was now at an end, and only slight breaches of the rules have since occurred from time to time, such as that to which I alluded in the beginning of this sketch, and to prevent a repetition of which, I have written you the early history of Lady Semibreve. I have nothing more to relate of the family at Bar Castle; and I will conclude by begging all my readers to unite their voices with that of public opinion, and join the lovers of peace and harmony in their endeavours to continue the good work of the

great Mr BLUMSHEKELSQUEEZY.



S P R I N G H E R A L D S.

A SOFTER murmur in the leafless woods,
And over meadows wide;
A joyous rushing of long-frozen floods
Down furrowed mountain-side.
A fitful sunbeam lighting up the scene,
Too dazzling bright to last,
Gliding storm-riven forest boughs between,
A waif of summers past.
Some star-bright snowdrops, winter's pretty flowers,
Fresh from their snowy fold;
A daisy smiling through long, lonely hours;
Or crocus-cup of gold.
Sweet-clustered primroses in forest-nooks,
Where dead leaves strew the ground;
And daffodils bent over purling brooks,
As listeners to their sound.
The glad new song of winged chorister,
The earliest of the grove,
Breaking the winter silence of the air
With thrilling notes of love.
Soul-stirring impulses of recent birth,
Which round the heart may cling:
An all-pervading influence on the earth—
The spirit of the Spring.

S H A K S P E A R E T E R C E N T E N A R Y.

On Saturday, April 23d, will be published—irrespective of the ordinary issue of *Chambers's Journal*—an *Extra Illustrated Double Number*, to contain a view of the Life and Writings of

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